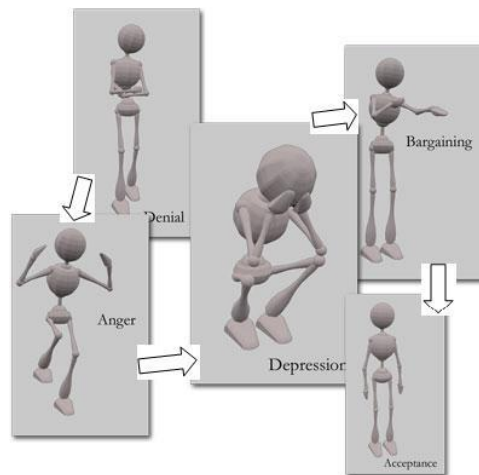


A Season of Grief
Day 48
Grieving Before the Loss



When a person you love is sick or suffering, you begin to grieve before the actual loss. In some cases you may think that most of your grieving is already done. But despite your preparations, the grief that occurs after a person's death goes beyond all your expectations.

Dr. Jim Conway lost his wife after a long battle with cancer. He says, "Sally got sick in 1990, and we talked frankly. She went through repeated surgeries, radiation, and chemo over the next seven years. I thought that because we had talked so much that there would be no grief. I really thought that I had resolved all that.

"But it is not like that at all. It was like looking at a video about jumping out of an airplane, free-falling, and finally your parachute opens. All of the previous stuff was just preparatory information, but it was not actually going out of the plane; it was not experiencing grief.

"When Sally died, it was as if somebody pushed me out of the plane, and now I am free-falling—this is what grief is like. You are in free fall. You wonder if the parachute is ever going to open. You wonder if you're going to hit the ground at 120 miles per hour."

Only You, Almighty God, can keep me from falling. I turn to You, believing Your promise:

"To him who is able to keep [me] from falling and to present [me] before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen."

Jude 24-25